

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

news release

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ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL STUDY UNDERWAY; ADVISORY GROUP ESTABLISHED

The formation of a select, external advisory group, the "Animal Damage Control Policy Study Advisory Committee," was announced today by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The committee will review and help validate the use and interpretation of data obtained by a comprehensive Federal study now underway of the problems of animal predation on western livestock. The study will place primary emphasis on the Federal role related to the problems of coyote depredation on sheep and cattle.

Although the committee will make recommendations, its duties are solely advisory. Decisionmaking remains the prerogative of the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks; and the Secretary.

Members of the committee, which will be chaired by Richard Myshak, Deputy to Robert L. Herbst, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, are Joe Helle, National Wool Growers Association; Jim Barron, National Cattleman's Association; Ed Yawn, American Farm Bureau Federation; John Grandy, Defenders of Wildlife; Bob Turner, National Audubon Society; Jim Bowns, Society for Range Management; Jack Grieb, Colorado Division of Wildlife; Gordon McOmber, Montana Director of Agriculture; R. J. Robel,

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Kansas State University; William Martin, University of Arizona; Richard Magleby, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Edwin Johnson, Environmental Protection Agency; and George Lea, Bureau of Land Management.

The Federal study, which began in January, will produce two products: a report and an option paper. The report will bring together, in an analytical framework, all relevant information and data. The option paper will be derived from the report. It will present, in brief, the pros and cons of specific courses of action, and it will be used as a basic decision-making aid at the Secretarial level.

In addition to helping validate the use and interpretation of the study's data, the committee will help ensure that options are clearly stated, that the analysis is technically sound, and that the study is conducted in an open manner. The committee also will serve to temper the differing concerns of the livestock industry and of the conservation and environmental communities.

The committee met for the first time on February 8 and 9. It will meet at least once but not more than three other times during the study, and it will terminate on July 31, 1978, unless renewed by the Secretary.

The study's schedule calls for a draft report to be made available for public review in April, for public hearings to be held in May, and for the report and option paper to be delivered to the Secretary in June 1978.

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